it was, nevertheless, of so noble a virtue that it never suffered Love to sway me without the faithful counsel of reason."[1]

Nevertheless, there were certain things that Bartolommeo at first found hard to accept. He noticed that, when she returned to consciousness after her prolonged ecstasies, Catherine always seemed to know what her women companions had done in the meanwhile, and sometimes rebuked them for idle talk or waste of time. The friar, " in my stupidity, being as yet ignorant ot the virtues of the holy virgin," could not at once believe that she did this by what he calls the prophetic spirit :—

" But, at that time, when once I came to her cell with her aforesaid confessor, after a long conversation she asked us what we were doing at the second and third hour of the night. But we, wishing to try her, said, questioning her : ' What dost thou think ?' And she answered : [c] Who knows this better than you yourselves ?' Then her confessor rejoined, at my suggestion : [f] I charge thee, on thy obedience, tell us if thou knowest what we were doing at that time.' But she humbly refused to do this, until her confessor charged her again on her obedience. Then, humbly bowing down her head, she said : 'You know well that there were four of you, and you were in the cell of the subprior, talking for a long while at that late hour.' We asked her who they were, and she named each ; and when we asked her what we said, she replied that, for the most part, we talked about things pertaining to the salvation of our souls, albeit at times we touched on other matters. I was amazed, but still doubted whether one of us four had not told her this. Wishing, therefore, to test whether she knew this by man or by the spirit of prophecy, 1 came to her on the following day, and in our conversation said : 'O mother' (for so we were wont to call her), * how knowest thou what we do ?' And she : [c] O son, since it has pleased our sweet Saviour to give me the sons and daughters which, by His gift, I have, nothing concerning you is hidden from me; but He showeth me clearly everything that is done about them.' Then I rejoined : * Thou knowest, then, what I was doing yesterday

[1] Cf. *Qontestatio cit.,* col. 1314, with *Vita Nuova,* §§2 and 19.